Use of Kin Terms in Joking

*601 522 One of the most frequent ways of joking among the Bororo is to use kin terms for unrelated persons, pretending that they are related. Most of the time in doing so the speaker implies that between him and the addressee there exists the kind of social relationship that is usually connoted by the [607] relevant kinship term. For example, inodowu, one's sister's husband, is not supposed to refuse any request of his brothers'in-law. Therefore, sometimes a Bororo asking for an object will say, "inodowu, give me that ...." The other, most of the times will answer, "I am not your sister's husband (akodowu). You do not have either an older sister (atuye), nor a younger one (aviye) that I could marry." But if the man who made the request is a powerful man things can go differently. There is a story about a strong man who went from one village to another calling everybody on his way inodowu. However, nobody objected to being called in this way because nobody dared--they were much too afraid of him.

At some other times the Bororo use kinship terms in an ironical or mocking sense. Parents will call a man flirting with their daughter ivagedu ("son-in-law"). A woman will address her brother's sweetheart as irago ("daughter-in-law"), and a man will address his sister's suitor as inodowu ("brother-in-law"). The women, speaking among themselves, will refer to the most successful lover of the village as chedoredu --our husband.

*601 522 [765] [224] To a man who is making love to a woman in mourning his companions will say: "Stay away from her, she is our "little mother," our "poor-little mother." After the hunt, it is a duty of the "ceremonial father" to carry the game to his wife ("the mother") who has to cook it for the "meal of the spirits." If, for some reason, the "father" did not join the hunt, this will provoke many jokes and comments from the other hunters. They will say, "Our father did not come, but we have here another 'our father' who will carry the meat," alluding to the sexual relations between this other man and "the mother." If the woman had many affairs in the past, which is quite usual among the Bororo, each man in his turn will deny being the most qualified "father" pointing to somebody else as the one who should carry the meat.

Conclusion

*601 114 When one arrives in the field he is immediately confronted both with a complicated set of relations and with different systems crosscutting each other. At this point all ideas about an ordered conceptual universe appear to be nonsense. It seemed to me that the Bororo were also confused, but ignored the contradictions and pretended that things were clear and simple. I tried to construct full genealogies but 551 did not succeed. For one the Bororo avoid uttering the names of dead people, and if persuaded to produce them, another difficulty arises. Everyone at birth receives several names and during his life he acquires many new ones. A good hunter about forty-five years old had fifty different names. Some

593 it is considered highly improper behavior to go against
578 one's cross-siblings. Today, the Bororo frequently quarrel with their spouses when they are drunk, and infidelities, divorces, and remarriages are common. But in the resulting fights it is always the brothers and sisters who stand against their respective spouses. There is no obligatory
593 [835] levirate among the Bororo and they condemn any sexual rela-
[522] tion with the brother's wife, although jokes between the two are allowed and expected. Brothers are supposed to make a common front against outsiders, and the sexual involvement of a man with his brother's wife would put a handicap on
[578] this. Most of the quarrels among the Bororo concern sexual affairs. A man who is having sexual relations with his
593 835 brother's wife, but together with the brother goes against another man who is also having an affair with the same woman, could be asked by this last man: "Why are you going against me? You too have been sleeping with your brother's wife." The Bororo say that this would be shameful for both brothers.

587 On the other hand, a man who is very sick may call one
593 of his unmarried brothers and tell him that he is going to

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[585] akaiwore, uwo kodo towuje akudawuje, uwo beto towuje akudawuje,
539 uwo atugo rakoja baku tovuje, uwo akaimo, uwo akududo. Awudo bogaire apoga mode akodadai akaregodui karo jao, barogo jao piji du tabo, akaregodui tori, itura piji du tabo. Kaje jawo karega aerudu kare ache, atuye makaguragai t akai duji. Awudore ache modema, aviye modema. Iyeripo tabo arore ji, akaba pagududo tudui poboto duji, tudui jerigi kae duji. Akaba pagududo tui ako karo kodu, ako barogo kodu ko duji. Jetuwo t akodoi tujeba areduji, tuyogudugodure ji boeji. Akaba pagududo, uchewo aki, uwowo aki, uyedagawo aki, uvuriwo aki, paduwo akujiyagi, jetuwo akodoi pudabo.

613 they were descendants of intramoiety unions. X was the only
626 man with a Tugarege (Paiwoe) father. The Ivagududoge wanted
178 to perform Marido Paru, which should be done by Ki Bakororo. In the absence of any Ki Bakororo, they wanted as his substitute at least some true Kiyedu (i.e., Kiyedu with Tugarege father). So they chose X. After performing the Marido ceremony, the Bororo say, X thinks that he is Ki Bakororo. Another informant said that he laughed whenever the Bororo said that Y (♀) was a true Kaigu. She was my informant's father's sister, and his father was Porireu Biyagareu, a lineage very close to Kaigu, but not true Kaigu. He would laugh but would not say anything. If others wanted her to be true Kaigu, it was fine with him. The same informant became quite upset when I told him that many people said that his wife was
• [52] not true Badajeba Kudoro, but Tuiwo Torogo. He said that he himself had called her jokingly tuiwo torogo (a small bird) because she talked so much. The other people had probably overheard him and started to think that she was Tuiwo Torogo. Instead, she was true Badajeba Kudoro, as could be seen from her proper name Atugoreudo, which belonged only to the great Kiye: Ki Bakororo, Badajeba Kudoro, and Jakorari. "You can't even joke any more," he concluded, shaking his head.

553 Another possibility open to a man without descendants
64 (sororal nephews) or clan brothers is to give a name to a child from another clan. He will have to give the boy some names from the boy's own clan, but he will give him his own names too. In the future the boy can take on the ceremonies